



the **BUSINESS CURVE**

ADVANCING MINORITY & SMALL BUSINESS AFFAIRS

FALL/WINTER 2021

CAROLINA CROSSROADS PHASES I & II

Page 12



**One-on-One Interview with Julie Ferguson
of Wilson.Ferguson Associates, LLC**

Page 6

In this issue...

Greetings from Greg Davis	.....	3
Newly Certified DBE/SBEs	.....	4
OnPoint's Cynthia Hardy Interviews Secretary of Transportation Christy Hall	.....	4
Retirement	.....	4
Title VI The Living Breathing Foundation of SCDOT's Division of Minority & Small Business Affairs	.....	4 - 5
Summer Internship Program 2021	.....	5
One-on-One Interview with Julie Ferguson of Wilson. Ferguson Associates, LLC	.....	6 - 7
Prime Contractor Estimators Grid: Subcontractors!	.....	8 - 9
2021 Summer Transportation Institute at Benedict College	.....	10
Expertise and Partnerships Fuel Small Business Development	.....	10 - 11
EEO and OJT - Carolina Crossroads ProjectWise Training	.....	11
Carolina Crossroads Phases I & II	.....	12
Too Much Training is NEVER Enough! It's What We Do.	.....	12 - 13
LEAD – Leadership education and development	.....	13 - 14
Staff Recognition	.....	14 - 15
Think About It.	.....	16
DBE/SBE Upcoming Training Courses	.....	16



Division of Minority and Small Business Affairs Staff. Front Row, L-R: Carolyn Burton, Cassandra Fletcher, Precious Bryant, Gary Linn, Juanita Campbell, Natalie Blackburn, James Cooper, Greg Davis, Kimberly Harris. Back Row, L-R: Ashton Williams, Barbara Beagles, Angela Page-Smith, Syrees Gillens Oliver, Anthony Cromartie, Henry Jones, Rodrick Stevenson, Natasha Livingston. Not Pictured: Ulsylla Johnson, Delicia Wingard, and Mary Wyeth

Greetings from MSBA,

Thank you for taking the time to review the Business Curve. Although the word “business” is in our title, our division’s focus revolves around investing in “people.” We achieve that by enhancing equal opportunities through small business development, workforce development, contracting and monitoring.

In this edition, you will see examples of how we invest in people’s success by helping them develop and grow their businesses. We have highlighted the types of training initiatives and resources we offer certified businesses to prepare owners and staff to attain professional certifications, to help them identify work, and to more effectively market their business. You will be able to read stories on our workforce development efforts, including our Summer Transportation Institute designed for high school students considering a career in the transportation arena. Furthermore, you will discover articles sharing how the division staff monitors activities, documents progress and even reports incidents of discrimination on transportation projects. SCDOT is not just concerned about building roads and bridges.

We have also added space to introduce you to recently certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), as well as members of our Minority and Small Business Assistance (MSBA) team. Our team continues to equip themselves through training, as well as collaborating with colleagues from other divisions through our LEAD program, in order to better assist those we serve.

As the Agency prepares to receive additional federal and state funds, we look forward to working with you to take advantage of the opportunities and meet the challenges that may present themselves. Please visit our division’s website (<https://www.scdot.org/business/bus-development-overview.aspx>) to learn more and how we can assist you.

Best regards,

Greg Davis

Division Director, Minority and Small Business Affairs

On the Cover: Eric Jones of Central Minority Maintenance, LLC driving a Hamm Roller during Basic Heavy Equipment Operator Training at Carolina Construction School for the Business Development Center's DBE training series.

Photo courtesy of Reid Baker of Carolina Construction School.

NEWLY CERTIFIED DBE/SBEs

MKF Electrical	Alliance Strategies Consulting	Bowlby and Associates, Inc.
Diaston Transport	Palmetto Engineering	S I Trucking
Ngineering, Inc.	Three Oaks Engineering	Leftlane Marketing
Glover Auto Transport	Affordable Pallet Services	Silverbacks Brothers
Ducere Construction Services	Ilesha & Akai Transportation	Conzal, LLC
Alphavets, Inc.	Insights and Outcomes	IIVE Solutions, LLC

OnPoint’s Cynthia Hardy Interviews Secretary of Transportation Christy Hall

SCDOT Secretary of Transportation Christy Hall was invited and appeared on OnPoint with Cynthia Hardy radio broadcast, September 12, to discuss the \$1 Trillion Infrastructure Bill and what it would mean to SC—particularly repairing and expanding the state’s system of roads and bridges. Congressman James E. Clyburn and Ivory Williams Mathews, chief executive officer of Columbia Housing, also shared the spotlight to address broadband expansion and the state of affordable housing in SC.

OnPoint with Cynthia Hardy radio broadcast covers 82% of SC and has been listed at #1 in their Sunday evening timeslot for over 15 years. The show has been considered a leading source of social and political information, especially in African American communities across the state. Between the weekly radio broadcast and podcast, each show averages around 2,500 listeners. Incidentally, OnPoint Media is a longtime DBE firm with SCDOT.



How to catch the show

<https://www.thebigdm.com/shows/onpoint-with-cynthia-hardy/>

Look for episode 9 12 21

<https://www.facebook.com/OnpointCynthia/videos/547348373017155>

FHWA’s Pam Foster Retiring

It is both an exciting, yet bitter-sweet time for Pamela McKie Foster who announced that she will retire from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on December 31, 2021. Currently, Ms. Foster is Civil Rights Officer for the South Carolina Division of FHWA. Prior to joining FHWA in 1996, she worked at SCDOT for over 10 years in the Office of Civil Rights Compliance, now the Division of Minority and Small Business Affairs (MSBA).



Mr. Greg Davis, Division Director, noted, “The support and counsel Ms. Foster has given the entire MSBA team over the years has been invaluable. Her actions have demonstrated that she always wanted us to put forth our best effort to ensure that whatever we did and whatever we submit to FHWA was the best possible. We have been fortunate to have her as a part of our team.”

Clearly, Pam Foster’s pursuit of excellence and the standard she set for herself and her professional partners is a tremendous legacy. We wish her success and fulfillment in this next phase of her life journey.

Title VI: The Living Breathing Foundation of SCDOT’s Division of Minority & Small Business Affairs

Title VI is important because it is a legal tool that guides our mission to enhance equal opportunities through: contracting, monitoring, small business development, and workforce development. Every aspect of the Division of Minority and Small Business Affairs and its’ current civil rights programs hinge on this amendment.

The Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964 states that discrimination on the grounds of race, color, or national origin shall not occur in connection with any programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance. Discrimination under the Title VI Program is an action or inaction, intentional or not, through which any intended beneficiary, solely because of race, color, or national origin, has been otherwise subjected to unequal treatment or impacted under any program or activity. Title VI Program objectives are:

- to ensure federally-assisted benefits and related services are made available and are equitably distributed without regard to race, color, or national origin;
- to ensure the level and quality of services are sufficient to provide equal access for any person without regard to race, color, or national origin;

(Continued on page 5)

(Title VI Continued)

- to ensure opportunities to participate in the planning and decision-making processes are provided to people without regard to race, color, or national origin;
- to ensure all applicants and recipients of federal financial assistance take corrective and remedial action to prevent discriminatory treatment of any beneficiary based on race, color, or national origin.

Title VI also requires that recipients of federal financial assistance

take reasonable steps to ensure that persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access to programs, services, and information. Persons who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English can be limited English proficient. These individuals may be entitled to language assistance in accessing a particular type of service or benefit.

Additional information and resources regarding Title VI is available on the Business Development Center’s website: <https://www.scdot.org/business/bus-development-titleVI.aspx>

Summer Internship Program – 2021



“All for one, and one for all” is a guiding principle for a team’s success and growth. Summer interns with their program supervisor and selection committee/mentors at SCDOT Headquarters. L-R -Syrees Gillens Oliver, summer internship program supervisor/DBE Certification Manager; David Olds, intern; Natasha Livingston, DBE Technical Assistance; Gregory Gravesandy, intern; Ulsylla Johnson, DBE Reporting. Not pictured: Rodrick Stevenson, DBE Certification.

The much sought after SCDOT Summer Internship Program presented the Division’s selection committee many qualified candidates. Their careful vetting yielded the best of the best: Mr. Gregory Gravesandy and Mr. David Olds, both are current students at the University of South Carolina. In addition to their academic achievements and rich experiences in the public and private sectors, Gregory and David brought positivity, enthusiasm, and readiness to their work with Division staff in each program and unit. They truly proved themselves to be assets during their summer tenure with us.

Some of their contributions are included in this issue: a compilation of Prime estimators’ interview responses grid, one-on-one interview with Wilson.Ferguson Associates owner, Julie Ferguson, and a photographic demonstration of “dressing for success.”

L-R, Summer interns, David Olds and Gregory Gravesandy, give thumbs-up to their on-site field experience in York County, Hwy. 321 under the supervision of DBE Technical Assistance staff. Not pictured: Director, Gary Linn, and Chief Technical Advisor, James Cooper.



One-on-One Interview with Julie Ferguson of Wilson. Ferguson Associates, LLC

1. Tell readers a little about your business.

Wilson.Ferguson Associates, LLC (WFA), is a SCDOT Certified DBE/WBE/SBE. We specialize in providing a professional and expert approach to bridge and roadway Construction Engineering and Inspection services. Our experience encompasses everything from initial clearing and implementation of best management practices in storm water and erosion control, to the final paving of hot mix asphalt surface, concrete paving, and bridge decks.

2. How long have you been in business?

WFA was established in 2012, gaining traction with our first contract in summer of 2015.

3. What made you choose this type of business?

I believe this industry chose me. In my late 20s, I decided to go back to school where an assessment tool suggested that I become a social worker. I had previously been a Guardian for family court a few times and I knew this was not the correct path for me. An admissions counselor asked if I was good at math so I tried a few engineering classes and enjoyed the challenge. Ultimately, that led me into Civil Engineering Technology.

Working in the field one day with Chief Technical Advisor & Compliance Manager, James Cooper and a DBE contractor, James said, “Julie, you need to do this, you’d be great! I’ll help you.” He did help by giving me a few tips on what to do first, and the most important was to become a SCDOT DBE certified firm.

4. What service(s) or product(s) do you offer/manufacture?

WFA provides special inspections, material testing and in service bridge inspection services.

5. Where did the name come from?

I chose Wilson.Ferguson Associates, LLC because Wilson is my maiden name and Ferguson is my married name.

6. How many employees do you have?

We currently have 15 people on staff and looking to grow across South Carolina. Our team of qualified staff include, junior, mid-level, and senior inspectors that are SCDOT certified, as well as administrators and project managers who are experts in their field in every phase of construction management.

7. What is unique about your business?

Roadway and Bridge construction inspection is a unique industry. A lot of people do not know it even exists, but we love being involved in various projects. In construction inspection, you never have a boring day in the field and there is nothing more exciting than watching a new road or bridge take shape or inspecting while the final surface lift of asphalt is placed on a road.



Julie Ferguson, owner of Wilson.Ferguson Associates, LLC onsite taking measurements.

8. How long have you been a DBE?

WFA has been a SCDOT certified DBE/ WBE/SBE for 8 years.

9. Why did you choose the DBE program?

I didn’t fully understand the DBE program. The entire DBE department has been so encouraging and helpful since I decided to start WFA. I have always admired women owned firms in this industry, like Barbara Mulkey and Sepi, and it is so wonderful to see the program support DBEs.

10. What are your responsibilities as the business owner?

It is very important to me to keep up with daily operations, making sure the business is running smoothly and our clients are pleased with our services. But, my most important responsibility is to my employees that have joined WFA and supported us on this journey. I was an inspector for many years and understand what it takes to keep them happy and to keep them safe so they can go home to their families every night.

11. What has been your greatest accomplishment so far being a part of the SCDOT DBE program?

Being selected to be highlighted in Business Curve is a wonderful accomplishment for WFA and opening our new office in York in May of 2021. Having Mr. Cooper come to our open house made me really proud of how far we have come.

12. How has the SCDOT helped your business grow?

Access to the Business Development Center’s classes, training, and advice.



James Cooper, chief technical advisor and compliance manager with Julie Ferguson.

13. What are some, if any, of your most complex contracts since being certified?

I would say being selected as the prime CE&I firm on Hardscabble Road through the statewide on-call has been the most complex and challenging contract. Taking over the management of an ongoing project is always difficult, but it is WFA’s goal to bring the project to completion and increase our working relationship in District 1.



On-site at US 701, Waccamaw River Prime PCL, November 2016.

14. What would you say to other businesses that are considering DBE certification?

I always tell them to not let fear or anxiety stand in their way and encourage them to contact the DBE program and talk with division staff. They are there to help. I want them to know that there are many people there to support you and the resources are almost limitless.

15. What is your long-term business goal?

WFA’s long-term goal is to graduate from SCDOT DBE program with continued growth and success and to encourage many others along the way.

16. What do you attribute your success to in the DBE program?

I contribute our success to initial and ongoing encouragement in addition to the overall generous empowerment provided by the DBE program.

17. What was your experience to be a small DBE Prime Contractor doing a project for the SCDOT?

I tell everyone who will listen that as long as you are dependable, hardworking, do your paperwork on time and correctly, SCDOT is always there to support a small DBE firm as a prime contractor.

18. Is there anything else you would like to add?

My goal is to give the people that work at WFA the empowerment to feel confident about the work they do, enjoy coming to work every day, and feel confident to provide for their families, and together, we can enjoy all of WFA’s successes and continue to build a wonderful organization.

Prime Contractor Estimators Grid: Subcontractors!

The MSBA team, including summer interns Gregory Gravesandy and David Olds, recently conducted a telephone survey of 17 Prime contractors asking them what they are looking for when hiring subcontractors. Eleven Primes responded with some pretty simple, straight forward responses. We share this information with you in a spreadsheet format listing the questions asked and their responses. While having

a capability statement was important, some contractors were looking at subcontractor websites, bonding capability and capacity. Please feel free to contact us with questions.

Firm	Question 1: How should a subcontractor make initial contact with to introduce themselves?	Question 2: What is your company looking for when partnering with a subcontractor?	Question 3: Do you require subcontractors to have the ability to obtain a bond?	Question 4: How important to is a website for a subcontractor?	Question 5: How important is a capability statement and what would you consider to be key points on a capability statement?	Question 6: What increases the probability of subcontracting with your company?	Question 7: Is there something SCDOT could do to encourage your company to subcontract with a DBE firm you have not subcontracted with before?	Question 8: Can you provide any other suggestions that would assist our subcontractors in approaching your company specifically or primes in general?
Firm A	Make initial contact via email.	Reliability, reputation, cost.	It depends on the size of the contract.	It is important in some cases only to visualize the work offered and work experience.	Very important that you describe what you do and your scope of work.	Relationships between them and the DBE as well as a good standing. You need to reach out to them in a timely mannerand schedule a meeting and pay attention to the bids. Timeliness and relevancy to what they are bidding is key.	N/A	Decide what you are bidding on ahead of time and frequently check BidX.
Firm B	Shake their hand - meet them in person and do business old-school. Follow up with an email or phone call expressing interest.	Experience is paramount and holding the correct equipment is equally important.	This depends on the size of the contract and scope of the work.	A website is not that important; just looking to find you on the DBE directory.	It is important to provide a quote, make sure it is presentabe and on nice letterhead - that is needed moreso than a capability statement.	Previous projects completed, low price and competitive but realistic pricing is huge to increase the probability. However, the most important part is building a relationship with the firm.	N/A	We encourage subcontractors to reach out to prime contractors and begin building a solid business relationship.
Firm C	Use their website portal to submit your contact information and interests as well as job references or past experiences to be listed for them. Also, you should consider reaching out via a personal phone call.	Most important are job references and any lists of past experiences to prove reliability. Capacity, manpower, equipment, and credit are also important.	The answer is mostly no unless the project/contract has a very large dollar amount.	A website can be very important if it is done correctly and looks professional.	It is important to explain your scope of work and how big of a job you can handle with your manpower/equipment.	Price stands out first, but only prices that are realistically low and can actually be executed.	N/A	Use the portal and reach out through email or phone call. You should express interest to the project manager so you are in their minds when they are thinking of subcontractors.
Firm D	Send an interest email and statement of qualifications to get in their mind.	Reliability and experience are most important.	Any projects over \$100,000 needs a bond.	A website is not entirely important but can be nice to see if it is done well.	A capability statement needs to provide general idea of what they can do and accomplish in a project.	A complete quote is needed as well as the description of scope of work. Showing you nderstand the obligations of the work you are taking on also helps.	Yes, make search engine for DBEs more refined.	Do not be afriad of contacting the contractor. Be sure to be communicative in reaching out to the prime contractors.
Firm E	Being communicative in general goes a long way, emailing and phonecalling with interest	Filling out the prequalification sheet gets the subcontractors on their radar and details everything they need	\$500,000 generally	No, it is nice but not entirely a requirement as long as you are reliable and have previous experience	Important to detail scope of work able to do	A lot is based on price. Safety is absolutely #1 concern, next is based on price and finally based on ability to be reliable and finish the project	Get vendors who have not done work in 2+ years off the list so they can stop reaching out to firms who will never respond. Also potentially create a similar list of GCs that the subcontractors can research and reach out to	Do not hesitate or be scared to reach out to a GC and introduce yourself to establish a relationship. Also attend DBE outreach events
Firm F	Phone call and should be followed up with email.	Dependability, safety, that they can perform duties that they say can do that, and honesty.	Sometimes.	It's good to have but it's not that big of a factor for them.	Very important.Their line of work, thoroughness, and experience. Doesn't want the capability statement to be too convoluted, more so simple and straight to the point.	Low bidder, has to be able to do what they say they can do, perform quality work, and do work in a timely manner.	Just making sure to continue that the DBE's that are recommended can actually do the line of work and are reliable.	It's important to make a phone call and doing research on prime contractors in general to have background information about them. The sub-contractors should always be ready to explain their line of work.
Firm G	Mr. Peace is the main point of contact, through call, email, and their main website can also be used as subcontractors can go to their website and register with them for opportunities and introduce themselves.	Subcontractors who specialized in one particular scope of work that they are good at doing is very attractive to them, good reputation, having the right equipment, having everything that they need in order to complete the job.	Not required but it is encouraged, always ask if they have a current bond rate percentage when they are looking at their scope.	It's helpful to have but it's not that big of a factor to them.	It's very important, it is needed to give them a guide of what a subcontractors capabilities are and track record, shows what they can provide Lane Construction. Their number one focus of scope of work, experience, labor force, equipment force, and any recent projects provided.	Competitive pricing, proven background, bonding is a plus when considering a project, to have gone through their pre-qualification process is another bonus.	Has a good relationship with DBE staff such as Mr. Cooper and Mr. Linn, if there is someone that they know can do the scope of work, would recommend to just keep them in the loop of DBE's. More references and recommendations because they have worked for them in the past.	Currently on NCDOT Advisory Council for Office of Civil Rights, thinks that if SCDOT was to develop this type of Advisory Council Board that would be helpful, would recommend that this board has quarterly meetings so communication can be strengthened about new opportunities with DBE's or a general DBE networking event that can happen between DBE's and prime contractors.
Firm H	Through email or phone call.	Reliability and experience.	No.	Not important.	Important. Experience and the work they have performed.	Low bidding and the past work they have done.	No suggestions at the moment.	Didn't have any suggestions at the moment.
Firm I	Typically they either get an email or phone call, a phone call provides more clarification about the background of sub-contractor and allows a formal introduction. An email provides more information on the services such as a brochure being included and they provide and more background info about the sub-contractor.	The communication is key, getting bids and quotes back to them quickly in a timely manner before the deadline, and quick responses from sub-contractor effective communication.	It is preferred, depends on the scope of work that is provided.	It's a not a huge plus or minus for them, capability statement is more important to them.	It's very important for them because that's what they are looking for upfront regarding a subcontractor so they can have more background information on them. A list of their services and following up with what type of services they provide. For example, if it is trucking, how much trucks do they have? Also mentioned that a list of references is very important.	Low bids, low quotes, reaching out to references on capability statement to learn more about the sub-contractor, and getting to develop a relationship with the subcontractor to get more comfortable with them, and being always a new sub-contractor because they are always willing to work with new ones.	Being more made aware of newly certified DBE's so they can be in the know of new subcontractors.	A filter function would be helpful when searching for DBE's so they can easily search for subcontracting DBE's that apply to Palmetto Corp of Conway, noted that when she looks for new subcontractors, the line of work doesn't apply to her business, and when someone new gets certified, sending out an email to all general contractors maybe quarterly, monthly, or yearly.
Firm J	They can either the call the office to task about information about the estimator or email the estimator, sub-contractor should preferably explain who they are.	Willingness to work, being able to schedule their crews to be on site when needed in order to complete job within the schedule, good solid quotes, looking for someone who is knowledgeable in their craft.	Not normally.	Not too important, more interested in whatever services the DBE officers, more preferably a pamphlet. More favoring when a subcontractor personally reaches out.	Very important. Past work, the amount of work they can handle at one time, how well they are completing work within in their schedule, past experience.	Low prices and the quality of work, how well can they complete the work, and how reliable can the sub-contractor be.	Ask SCDOT to track subcontractor's success rate and performance scores on subcontractors.	Generally, to try to contact them long before a project is let, DBE utilizing discussion board more on SCDOT extranet to talk about work they are looking for, Mr. Ryan uses the discussion board to post opportunities about Thrift Development so he will be able to notice if a DBE posts something that will apply to his company.
Firm K	A phone call to the procurement manager or estimating group is the best way or DBE outreach meeting.	Looking for subcontractors that have a record of good performance, a good relationships with their clients, subcontractors that have performed well on SCDOT projects specifically, and subcontractors that will be dependable and reliable. A strong safety record is very important.	Not required but it is a positive factor.	It's a positive factor but not extremely important.	For subcontractors that they have not worked with, it is very important because it is an executive level introduction to the company. It needs to be detailed and accurate, not too general. Specific detailed examples of the work the subcontractor has performed and who it was for.	It boils down to performance, being able to execute the work, being able to really partner with United to be successful, and communication is very important.	If SCDOT would be willing to provide some reference verification and performance/quality of work, it would be very helpful. A subcontractor performance rating system that could be accessed from prime contractor.	Just in general, pay attention to the upcoming bid lettings and if they're interested in an upcoming project, communicate early and directly to prime contractor.

2021 Summer Transportation Institute at Benedict College

The 2021 Summer Transportation Institute (STI) was conducted virtually by Benedict College on June 29 through July 22, 2021. The program consisted of twenty-one (21) students, 9th through 11th grade, representing fifteen (15) high schools in South Carolina.

STI, a Federal Highway Administration program initiative, was created to bring about awareness of and expose middle and high school students to career opportunities in the transportation industry. South Carolina is considered the “birth state” of STI because the first program was held on the campus of South Carolina State University in 1993. Since that time, the STI has expanded from a single university to multiple colleges and universities throughout the country.

STI is comprised of three (3) components: academic, enhancement, and sports/recreation. Each component provides a stimulating introduction to the field of transportation, motivates students towards professions in the industry, as well as enhances leadership and teamwork skills. The academic curriculum emphasizes the importance of safety and provides exposure to all modes of

transportation including land, air, water, and rail. During the program, students engaged in activities that assisted in gaining unique exposure to the transportation industry. Transportation professionals provided presentations about transportation career options, highway construction projects and safety. Students were also able to engage in virtual simulations and interactive software that provided them an opportunity to create technical simulations relating to automobiles.

The enhancement component consisted of ACT preparation, leadership skills, resume writing and interview skills.

The Culminating Ceremony was held on Thursday, July 22, 2021. Students gave PowerPoint presentations sharing the highlights of lessons learned while participating in the STI. The occasion was celebrated by staff, as well as representatives from SCDOT and FHWA

STI continues to serve as a mechanism that prepares our future workforce for rewarding careers in the transportation industry.

2021 STI PARTICIPANTS:

DaQuan Adams	—	Spartanburg High School	Malachi Johnson	—	Lee Central High School
Akiya Byrd	—	Lancaster High School	Ja’Nyle Jones	—	Lower Richland High School
Johnathan Chambers	—	Hopkins Middle School	Khi Moorer	—	Gaffney High School
Jaden Clark	—	Hand Middle School	Lordes Nash	—	Columbia High School
Jhmouri Davis	—	Edisto High School	Tianna Phillips	—	Eau Clair High School
Na’Andra Davis	—	Edisto High School	Z’onia Rogers	—	CA Johnson High School
Hanna Dornik	—	Dreher High School	Promise Scott	—	CA Johnson High School
Zaria Dozier	—	Ridgeview High School	Faith Stewart	—	Lancaster High School
Amery Grant	—	Carvers Bay High School	Kennedi Williams	—	Kelly Mill Middle School
Khlowey Harvey	—	Lower Richland High School	Tristan Wingate	—	Lower Richland High School
Darius Hopkins	—	Eau Clair High School			

Expertise and Partnerships Fuel Small Business Development

The increase in the SCDOT infrastructure improvement program has resulted in an increased need for certified erosion and sediment control inspectors. In addition, SCDOT is committed to meeting the agency’s Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goals set for SCDOT projects. Having DBE firms with CEPSCI certified employees benefits the DBE office goals as well as the demand for construction site CEPSCI inspectors. In order to support the Business Development Center with DBEs attaining the CEPSCI certification, Jackie Williams, SCDOT’s stormwater manager conducted informal tutoring sessions. They were review meetings with questions and answers.

The initial session was an 8-hour event held at the SCDOT Headquarters on July 22, 2021 hosting 10 DBEs. The five follow-up training sessions utilized the Microsoft Teams live-virtual format that included a practice worksheet. The SCDOT hosted training events were all done in an effort to supplement the Clemson

CEPSCI certification class.

The CEPSCI students were committed in studying the material which resulted in having the highest CEPSCI passing rate ever for DBEs (76%). The SCDOT stormwater manager is committed to improving the tutoring sessions, creating improved study guides and including DBEs in related SCDOT stormwater section training classes with the goal of having a 100% DBE CEPSCI passing rate.

(Continued on page 11)



Jackie Williams

(Expertise and Partnerships Continued)



CEPSCI Exam Prep group – The following companies attended the July 22 training: Apex Construction Group, LLC Casarez Construction, LLC Casarez Construction, LLC DESA, Inc.; G & P Construction, Hauling and Environmental, LLC; Infiniti Solutions Global; ML Builders, LLC; SITEC, LLC; Sosa Transport, LLC; TSB Hauling, LLC

EEO and OJT - Carolina Crossroads ProjectWise Training

The Office of Civil Rights Programs recently conducted trainings at the ProjectWise Workshop for Carolina Crossroads Project (CCR). The training consisted of Resident Construction Engineer (RCE) District Engineering Administrator and consultants working on the CCR project and was designed to reacquaint them with the Civil Rights requirements.

Henry Jones is the on-the-job training program coordinator. He presented “Training Special Provision (TSP) Requirement” for RCE/Consultants that will be assigned to the CCR Phase 1 project. It informed participants that the overall purpose of TSP is to assist contractors satisfying their Equal Employment Opportunity requirements. The goal is to increase the number of employees that are trained in highway construction while making sure they are improving the skills of women, minorities, and economically disadvantaged individuals.

Cassandra Fletcher is the equal opportunity/on-the-job-training lead. Her presentation addressed “External Equal Opportunity (EEO) In-Depth Contract Compliance Reviews” which are conducted on federal-aid projects with a contract value of one (1) million dollars or more. The contract compliance review is conducted to ensure compliance with EO requirements.



Seated L-R: Precious Bryant, Henry Jones, Cassandra Fletcher review materials in preparation of facilitating training.

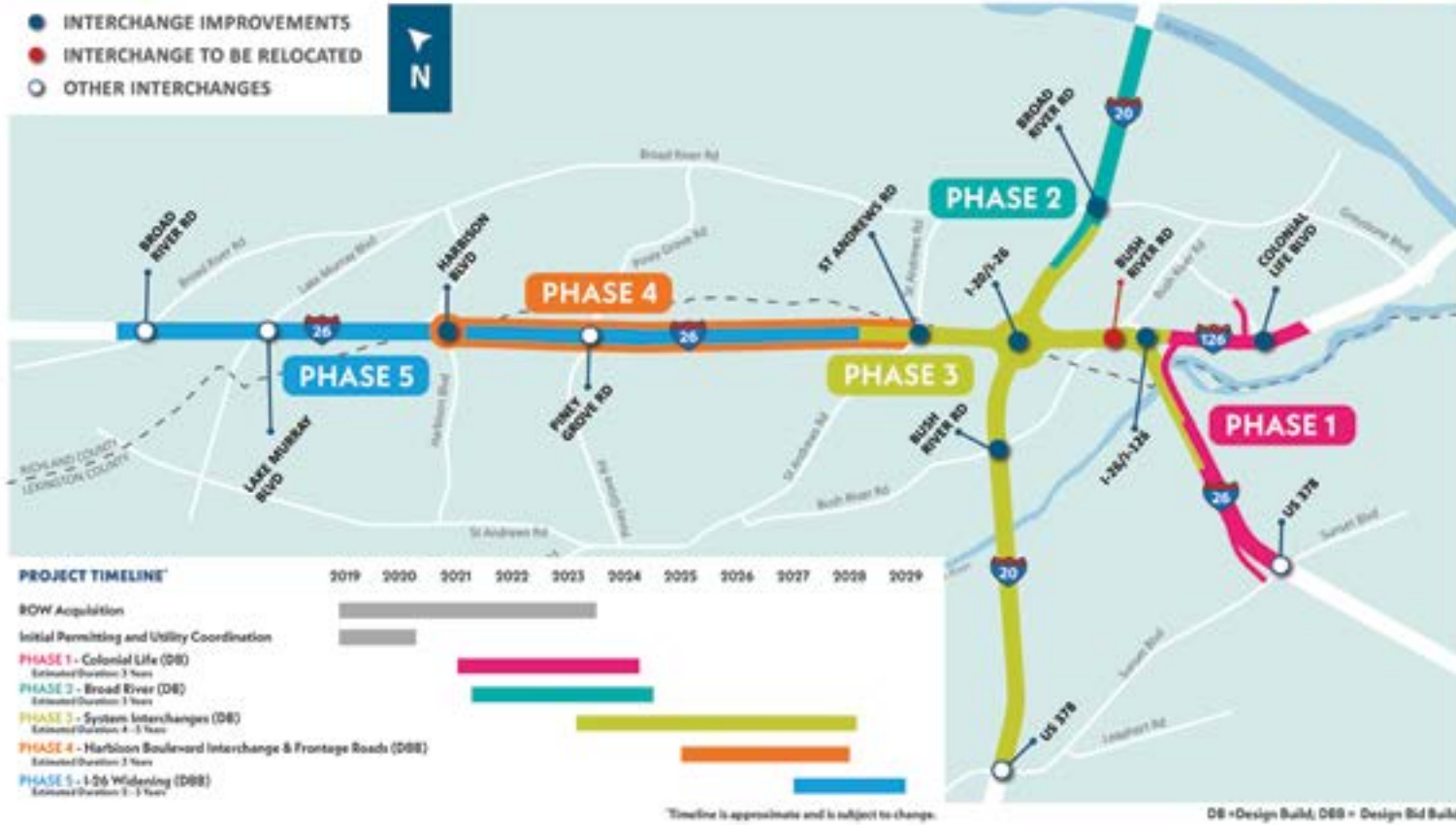
Precious Bryant is the equal employment opportunity coordinator. She elaborated on “Stage-Type Inspections (STI)” which assist the Office of Civil Rights Programs in determining which contractors will be selected for an “In-Depth Contract Compliance Review.” The Office of Civil Rights Programs uses STI as a monitoring tool that provides an overview of contractor compliance with EEO requirements on federal-aid projects and helps identify concerns that need to be addressed in order to be in compliance.

CAROLINA CROSSROADS PHASES I & II

Archer Western and United Infrastructure Group, joint venture (AUJV) were selected as the Prime contractors for both phases. They are holding individual one-on-one meetings with DBE firms to discuss subcontracting opportunities. Be ready and prepared to discuss your business with them. Contact Kathryn Stutt, AUJV at 803-932-8041 to schedule your appointment for October or November.

Phased Construction Map

June 28, 2021



CCR Phase Map Courtesy of: HDR, Inc.



Thad Brunson of CDM Smith, Inc., Gary Linn of SCDOT DBE Technical Assistance, and Charles Eleazer of Neel-Schaffer, Inc. debrief following training for Carolina Crossroads.

Too Much Training is NEVER Enough! It's What We Do.

We live in an ever changing world where constant change requires necessary adaptation for survival and success. The same can be said when it comes to training. Whether on the giving or receiving end, the DBE Reporting and Data Management Unit (DBER&DMU) understands the importance and value of training. We believe we can never have too much training because it enhances our ability for continual growth and development. Therefore, it is essential to obtain the required knowledge to minimize potential problems in the early stages of a project and fully manage information throughout a project's life.

Recently, the DBER&DMU held a webinar with prime contractor Palmetto Site-work and onsite training with Michael Baker International, a consultant firm providing project management (Continued on page 13)

(Too Much Training Continued)

for Carolina Crossroads. Both trainings focused on DBE Contract Reporting where the importance of accurate and timely submission of data, and open communication are crucial for effective project monitoring. In addition to specific guidance, trainers addressed concerns relevant to oversight and management of project activities according to the regulations which impact payments to DBEs, prime goal progress and, of course, compliance.



Amanda Deaton of Michael Baker International, Inc., Carolyn G. Burton, Ulsylla Johnson, and Delicia Wingard SCDOT DBE Reporting exchange ideas about project management and effective communication strategies.

Additionally, DBER&DMU participated in an on-site training led by Michael Baker International that provided an overview on the usage of the ProjectWise Deliverables Management system. This

LEAD – Leadership education and development

SCDOT LEAD is a year-long leadership development course designed for employees looking to gain professional acumen and better compete for future senior leadership positions within the agency. Qualified candidates should demonstrate potential for assuming positions of greater responsibility and authority; and possess effective communication skills. In addition, employees must have successfully completed the SCDOT Essence of Leadership course.

The Division of Minority and Small Business Affairs understands and values the Agency's investment in its staff through professional growth opportunities. Furthermore, this program positions our staff to better assist the businesses and individuals they serve.

Here's what a few of the Division's LEAD participants, past and present, have to say about the "valued added" to their specific work with DBEs, as well as for their overall professional development.

Delicia Wingard (pictured bottom right) is currently enrolled in the LEAD SCDOT Class of 2022. She is program coordinator lead in the DBE Reporting and Data Management unit of the Business Development Center:

"I want to attend LEAD to continue developing my leadership skills while managing work-related responsibilities for the overall mission of the Department. It has always been my desire to motivate and inspire others to give the best of themselves. Being faithful, dedicated and hardworking are attributes that are necessary for an individual's continued development as an employee and a leader. LEAD will assist with my professional growth and development, increase my overall knowledge of SCDOT, help me to overcome any obstacles

Delicia Wingard (bottom right) pictured with her 2022 LEAD Class peers.

(Continued on page 14)

system tracks the workflow for receiving, marking-up and sending project documents; it is an efficient communication tool for reviewing relevant DBE data in one electronic location.

As a result of these trainings, both facilitators and participants obtained a better understanding of reporting requirements and exchanged ideas on how to communicate and manage projects more effectively. Knowing that we can never acquire too much training, the DBER&DMU is always available to provide training and assistance for internal and external customers statewide, accordingly. DBE Quarterly Report documents and information are located on SCDOT's website at <https://www.scdot.org/business/bus-development-reporting.aspx>.



Amanda Deaton and Michael Neyman, of Michael Baker International, Inc. prepare to lead ProjectWise Deliverables Management system training.

LEAD

Congratulations to this year's participants!

 Michael Bagley Associate Engineer III Longmont Maintenance	 Lauren Benjamin Executive Assistant Office of the Secretary	 Shawn Burroughs Human Resources Manager I Human Resources	 Tony Edwards Associate Engineer IV RPC3	 Carolyn Fisher Safety and Operations Engineer FHWA
 Renee Gardner Associate Engineer IV RPC3	 Meagan Hare Program Assistant Agency Events	 Lisa Johnson Senior Accountant/Fiscal Analyst Financial Planning	 Eric Jones Associate Engineer III District 6, Specialized Bridge	 Joe Laws Associate Engineer III Pickens Construction
 Christina Lewis Program Manager I Office of Planning	 Casey Lucas Associate Engineer IV RPC4	 Erin Porter Program Manager II Office of Planning	 Brian Rister Information Technology Services	 David Rogers Associate Engineer III Construction
 Toya Scipio Associate Engineer II Traffic Engineering	 Stephen Shehan Associate Engineer II Laurens Maintenance	 Emily G. Thomas Program Manager II Traffic Engineering	 Brad Trout Associate Engineer III District 4 Office	 Tripp Ward Associate Engineer III District 5 Office
 Cruz Wheeler Associate Engineer IV Maintenance	 Clifton White Associate Engineer III District 2 Office	 Cynthia Whittenburg Human Resources Consultant II Human Resources	 Christopher Williams Associate Engineer III District 7 Office	 Delicia Wingard Program Coordinator II Minority and Small Business Affairs

LEAD SCDOT Class of 2022

(LEAD Continued)

to effective leadership and allow me to provide continual support to DBE firms that aid the Department in maintaining the roads and bridges in our great state. I am honored to be a participant.”

Syrees Gillens Oliver is a graduate of LEAD and currently the DBE certification program manager in the Office of Civil Rights Programs:

“The course is a forum for relationships to be established. Throughout the program, all agency directors presented information for their respective areas which allowed participants to receive cross-divisional training while enhancing each division’s responsibility for the success of the Agency’s Strategic/10 Year Plan. According to the Strategic Plan, the Office of Minority and Small Business Affairs’ goal is to increase competition by growing the number of South Carolina contractors capable of bidding on road and bridge work. Naturally, the objective would be for us to enhance the network of small businesses that are ready, willing, and able to assist the Agency in meeting its infrastructure goals. Based on our measure, we could attain our goal if we increased the number of eligible certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprises and Small Business Enterprises that receive technical training, business development, and management assistance through SCDOT. As a participant of the LEAD program I was able to receive a more

in depth understanding of our division’s goal. As a graduate of the course, it has assisted me to incorporate process improvements for the betterment of our DBEs that would also keep us aligned with our agency’s Strategic Plan.”

Gary Linn is director of DBE Technical Assistance and Mega Projects and offers this insight:

“The program provides a new perspective on how the entire SCDOT Team works toward a common goal: safe roads, bridges and highways...from human resources, to building maintenance, to engineering, finance, construction, road maintenance, etc. This allowed me to provide effective, timely assistance to our DBE firms knowing which part of the wheel can resolve an issue. It also helped me to become a better manager, supervisor and director.”

James Cooper is chief technical advisor and compliance manager in DBE Technical Assistance and Mega Projects:

“I have been with the Agency for over 18 years and the biggest thing I learned from LEAD Class of 2020 is what it takes for this agency to run. Learning about each different SCDOT division, being able to meet directors of every division and see what they do, i.e., day-to-day operations, puts my work in context. In addition, I gained valuable tools that I plan to use in the future, e.g., teamwork and better communication = success.”

Staff Recognition

Juanita Campbell



Ms. Juanita Campbell is excited to have served the Division of Minority and Small Business Affairs since September 2011, transitioning from many years in the private sector to the public. She began her SCDOT career in the Business Development Center before moving to the DBE Reporting office for two years where the need was great. Juanita transitioned back to the Business Development Center in 2016 to an administrative role. In December 2019, she was elevated to the Training Coordinator position.

She is the main point of contact within the Business Development Center and enjoys building relationships with both the DBEs and internal staff. Juanita’s primary responsibilities are office coordination and monitoring budgets, as well as arranging DBE/SBE Outreach and training events, maintaining historical records of each, as well as those associated with the Marketing and Training Tuition Assistance programs.

Ms. Campbell is dedicated and passionate about ensuring that essential and expert training events are offered to assist DBEs growing their businesses. She continually strives to provide exceptional training services.

Juanita’s vast experience regarding the nuances training programs comes from having studied at Peirce College & Western Governors University and completing a host of certificate programs.



Natasha Livingston

Natasha J. Livingston has been serving for three years as Technical Advisor in the DBE Technical Assistance unit in the Division of Minority and Small Business Affairs. Natasha’s career at South Carolina Department of Transportation started at the Orangeburg County’s Construction office as a project inspector for Calhoun and Orangeburg counties using the valued “hands-on” approach.

In her current role, Natasha still enjoys putting her “boots to the ground” while assisting DBE firms. From outreach events and Pre-Construction meetings, to the completion and final inspection of a project, she is always ready and available to assist with any technical issue along the way. She enjoys problem solving alongside DBE firms, for example: networking, addressing prompt-payment issues, and bidding issues. Natasha’s skills and certifications in asphalt, CEPPI, traffic control, and project management have enabled her to assist countless disadvantaged firms.

Ms. Livingston has been a South Carolina State employee for over 15 years. She originally started with the Department of Corrections. Natasha has always had a passion for helping her community; she feels helping small firms grow into their full potential one project at a time certainly counts. She is currently doing her part to aid in repairing the highways, bridges, and roads of our beautiful state of South Carolina and is loving it!



Angela Page-Smith

Angela Page-Smith began her career at SCDOT in January of 2016 as a (DBE) Certification Analyst for the Division of Minority and Small Business Affairs. In this role, she investigated firms and prepared detailed analytical reports, as well as served as the Unified Certification Program (UCP) Liaison. A little over six months later, she received a promotion to the Title VI Coordinator position. Ms. Smith’s responsibilities include the following: monitoring the Title VI Program; collecting and analyzing statistical data; conducting Title VI training, investigating discrimination complaints; conducting compliance reviews of SCDOT Internal Program Areas, cities, counties, consultants, and contractors; and, conducting joint reviews of Human Service Providers, Council of Governments and Metropolitan Organizations. She also prepares the Annual Title VI Implementation Plan to include updates to the policies, procedures, and implementation changes.

Ms. Smith has been dedicated to this role for over five years; she believes that providing excellent customer service is key to aligning SCDOT’s core values with the goals of the Civil Rights Department.

She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Nutrition from Winthrop University where she received the Dean’s List academic achievement award, after completing her first semester. She also holds a Master’s of Health Administration Degree as well as a Master’s of Arts in Human Resource Management from Webster University.

Prior to joining SCDOT, she served as an Investigator III for the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulations, an Investigator II for the Bureau of Community Nutrition Services, and a Community Nutritionist for the Women’s Infant and Children Program for the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control.



Your business is your dream. When meeting with prospective customers, dress for your dream, not your nightmare.

– Ashton Williams
DBE Technical Assistance

Dress for your dream illustrated by Division Director Greg Davis and summer interns Gregory Gravesandy and David Olds.



DBE/SBE UPCOMING TRAINING COURSES*

DATE	COURSE
October 26-28, 2021	Construction Bidding & Estimating - Concrete Onsite: Conference Room G-20
October/November 2021	Create Your Safety Manual Virtual Training
November 11-12, 2021	OSHA 10-Hour General Industry Onsite: SCNSC Training Facility, Irmo, SC
November 16 & 17, 2021	Strategic HR: Bringing HR into the New Normal – Virtual Training
December 2-3, 2021	Temporary Traffic Control - Design & Supervision Onsite: Southeastern National Safety Council Irmo, SC
December 6, 2021	Flagger - Novice Onsite: Southeastern National Safety Council Irmo, SC
December 9, 2021	The ABC's of Being Tax Compliant/Preparing for Retirement & Financial Planning Onsite: Conference Room G-10
Winter of 2022	Estimating & Bidding for Consultants - TBD Onsite: Columbia

Interested in registering for an upcoming training? Complete the Training Registration Form at: <https://www.scdot.org/business/pdf/businessDevelopment/2021-July-December-Calendar.pdf> then email it to: DBEBusinessDevelopmentCenter@scdot.org